bridges as 'very weak and distressed' requiring urgent need of replacement; and

(b) the details of these age-old railway bridges alongwith the year of construction and the time-frame by which these will be replaced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) There has been no delay in implementation of recommendations of Railway Safety Review Committee's report (1999). No specific list of bridges was mentioned by Committee in their report. However, Committee had noted about 262 distressed bridges existed on Indian Railway as on 1.4.99. In pursuance of their recommendation, all above distressed bridges were got inspected by Territorial Chief Engineers of the Railways and their rehabilitation/rebuilding taken up. The activity of rehabilitation/rebuilding of these distressed bridges and fresh accruals has-got a fillip since the sanction of Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF) in 2001-02 and a total of 927 distressed bridges have been rebuilt/ rehabilitated in last five years.

Railway Pension Fund

979. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rakesh Mohan Committee had estimated a shortfall in appropriation to the Railway Pension Fund to the tune of more than Rs.40,000 crores by 2000;

(b) whether the Railways have been appropriating funds as per actuarial calculations to meet the pensionary charges; and

(c) which are the zonal railways having adverse debit balances in the Pension Fund?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Rakesh Mohan Committee has estimated the pension liabilities to past employees and future liabilities to current employees in respect of their pensions entitlements accrued for past service as on 30th April 2000, to be Rs. 40,000/- crores. The Committee had commented that this does not mean the amount is needed immediately-ratherthis is the cash sum, which if invested at that time would be sufficient to meet those accrued liabilities as they fall due.

(b) When the Pension Fund was set up in 1964, it was preceded by calculations by the Government Actuary. Thereafter, actuarial calculations were done in 1974. However, the appropriations to the Pension Fund are being done out of operating surplus on 'Pay as you go' basis.

(c) The following zonal railways are having adverse balances as on . 31.3.2004 in the Pension Fund:

1. Central
2. Eastern
3. Northern
4. North Eastern
5. Southern
6. South Central
7. South Western.

Banspani-Daitari railway line

980. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a move to take away Banspani-Daitari railway line from East Coast Railway to South Eastern Railway; and

(b) if so, the projected revenue potential of this railway line and to what extent the loss of this revenue will affect the viability of the East Coast Railway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. However, Train Operation on the completed portion of the Banspani-Daitari rail line, which at present has connectivity only with South Eastern Railway, will be managed temporarily by South Eastern Railway due to operational convenience and this arrangement will continue till connectivity with East Coast Railway is established.

(b) Does not arise. Viability of a Railway is not measured on the basis of its earnings.